

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 236097 TOSEC 270627

55

ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /017 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS:JMORDWAY:MG

APPROVED BY S/PRS - FREDERICK Z. BROWN

S/S - MR. BRIDGES

----- 060461

P 231712Z SEP 76 ZFF6

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT PRIORITY

INFO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 236097 TOSEC 270627

FOR EAGLEBURGER FROM S/PRS - BROWN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:SOPN

SUBJECT: PRESS ITEM 9/23/76

NO. 41

FOLLOWING IS MARVIN KALB, FIRST LINE REPORT, CBS RADIO,
SEPTEMBER 23, 1976:

"URGENT, TOP PRIORITY, CRITICAL. WHAT ARE WE DESCRIBING,
AT LEAST IN THE WORDS OF THE FORD ADMINISTRATION? THE
STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS WITH RUSSIA. YET, THEY ARE
STALLED. WHY? AN ATTEMPT AT AN ANSWER IN A MINUTE.

"A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO, THE AMERICAN AND SOVIET DELEGATIONS
TO THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS, KNOWN SIMPLY AS
SALT, RECONVENED IN GENEVA. NO FANFARE ON EITHER SIDE.
IN FACT, THE STATE DEPARTMENT DID NOT EVEN ISSUE THE USUAL
PRESS RELEASE. THE DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN SAID ALL OF THE
PROPER THINGS WITH A STRAIGHT FACE ABOUT HOW CRITICAL, URGENT
IMPORTANT THESE TALKS ARE, AND HOW ABOUT POLITICS,
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 236097 TOSEC 270627

AMERICAN POLITICS, DOES NOT AFFECT THE WHITE HOUSE'S

DELIBERATIONS, NOT IN ANY WAY. THE DELIBERATIONS, HE SAID, ARE CONDUCTED ON THE BASIS OF THE NATIONAL INTEREST. NO DOUBT, THE NATIONAL INTEREST PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE. THE SUBJECT IS OF OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE.

-BUT NO DOUBT, TOO, ACCORDING TO A GOOD DEAL OF SPADEWORK, THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE, TOO. IT IS APPARENT THAT THERE HAS BEEN A SHARP DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENTS ABOUT WHAT THE AMERICAN POSITION SHOULD BE, AND IT IS EQUALLY APPARENT THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAS NOT CHOSEN TO NARROW THE AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT, AND THEN MAKE A COMMAND DECISION. A MONTH OR SO AGO, THERE WERE REPORTS THAT THE VERIFICATION PANEL AT THE WHITE HOUSE WAS GOING TO MEET TO AIR THE DIFFERENCES AND TRY TO RESOLVE THEM. SO FAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED, THE PANEL, IF IT EVER MET, RESOLVED NOTHING. THE PRESIDENT APPEARS TO BE MARKING TIME ON THE CRITICAL ISSUE OF STRATEGIC ARMS BECAUSE HE DOES NOT WANT IT TO BECOME A CAMPAIGN PROBLEM.

"IT COULD HAVE BECOME A CAMPAIGN ASSET, OR SO SEVERAL OF HIS ADIES SAY. BUT THAT WOULD HAVE REQUIRED A THOROUGH AIRING OF THE DIFFERENCES WITHIN HIS ADMINISTRATION. THAT MIGHT HAVE SUGGESTED DISUNITY; IT WOULD HAVE PRODUCED LEAKS. AND HE CHOSE THE SAFE ROUTE. SO, WHEN US AMBASSADOR U. ALEXIS JOHNSON RETURNED TO GENEVA THE OTHER DAY, HE CARRIED NO NEW NEGOTIATING INSTRUCTIONS. IF THE RUSSIANS ARE CARRYING A BIG SURPRISE, THEY ARE KEEPING IT A SECRET SO FAR. THE UPSHOT IS STAGNATION. BUT IT IS STAGNATION WITHIN AN ENVIRONMENT OF CONTINUING WEAPONS PRODUCTION AND PERFECTION ON BOTH SIDES.

"EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE BUILDING A MILITARY MACHINE THAT MAY, IN DUE COURSE, BECOME SO MUCH MORE POWERFUL THAN AMERICA'S THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL, IN EFFECT, HAVE A FIRST STRIKE CAPABILITY, AND TO OFFSET THAT POSSIBILITY, THE PENTAGON WANTS TO BUILD BIGGER AND BETTER WEAPONS. AND AS A RESULT, THE ARMS RACE CONTINUES, BUT ON A LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION THAT SIMPLY STAGGERS THE IMAGINATION.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 236097 TOSEC 270627

"YET, FOR THE PAST SIX MONTHS, EVER SINCE THE RUSSIANS

GAVE THE UNITED THEIR LATEST PROPOSAL ON BREAKING THE DEADLOCK, THERE HAS BEEN NO FORMAL RESPONSE. THERE ARE TWO OBSTACLES: HOW TO COUNT THE SOVIET BACKFIRE LONG-RANGE BOMBER, AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THE AMERICAN CRUISE MISSILE. ACCORDING TO THE VLADIVOSTOK AGREEMENTS REACHED BY PRESIDENT FORD AND SOVIET LEADER BREZHNEV

AT THE END OF 1974, A CEILING OF 2,400 STRATEGIC WEAPONS WAS SET FOR EACH SIDE, 1,320 OF WHICH COULD BE EQUIPPED WITH MULTIPLE WARHEADS. HOW DO THE BACKFIRE AND THE CRUISE BECOME AN ACCEPTABLE PART OF THESE STATISTICS? THAT'S THE ISSUE. IT'S STRATEGIC, IT'S NUMERICAL, BUT IT IS LARGELY POLITICAL, AND IN THIS VERY POLITICAL TIME, PRESIDENT FORD DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE WILLING TO MAKE THIS KIND OF POLITICAL DECISION, AND THE NUMBER OF WEAPONS ON BOTH SIDES BUILD UP ALONG WITH THE GROWING IMPRESSION THAT POLITICS OVERRIDES EVEN A COMMON SENSE URGE TO CONTROL THE ARMS RACE."

ROBINSON

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, SALT (ARMS CONTROL)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE236097
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JMORDWAY:MG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760359-1064
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760926/aaaaawjt.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 FEB 2004 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <11 JAN 2005 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS ITEM 9/23/76 NO. 41 FOLLOWING IS MARVIN KALB, FIRST LINE REPORT, CBS R
TAGS: SOPN, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (KALB, MARVIN)
To: SECRETARY AIRCRAFT
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006